

INFORMATION FOR VOTERS

TOWN OF GROTON (MA)



2025 BALLOT QUESTION BOOKLET
ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION
MAY 20, 2025

Published by:
Dawn E. Dunbar
Town Clerk of the Town of Groton

TOWN OF GROTON (MA) 2025 ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION VOTING INFORMATION

Annual Town Election

- Groton is holding its Annual Town Election on **Tuesday, May 20, 2025**
- Polls will be open from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM
- Polling Locations:
 - Precinct 1: Groton Center, 163 West Main Street (Route 225)
 - Precinct 2: Marion Stoddart Building Gymnasium, 344 Main Street
 - Precinct 3: Marion Stoddart Building Gymnasium, 344 Main Street

Purpose of the Annual Town Election Ballot Questions

- Question 1, explained in this brochure, requests a General Override of Proposition 2½ to pay for the Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District for the fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2025.
- Question 2, explained in this brochure, requests a General Override of Proposition 2½ to pay for the addition of six (6) Firefighter/EMT's for the Groton Fire Department for the fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2025.

Vote by Mail Ballots & Absentee Ballots

- Vote by Mail ballots are available for the Town Election.
- The last day and hour to request a **ballot by mail** is Tuesday, May 13, 2025 by 5:00 PM.
- Vote by Mail Ballots **must be received** by the Clerk's office by the close of polls (8:00 PM) on Tuesday, May 20, 2025. Ballots can be left in the drop box outside the back door of Town Hall or hand delivered to the Clerk's Office.
- The last day and hour to vote by **Absentee Ballot in person** is Monday, May 19, 2025 by 12:00 PM.
- Please allow time for mailing or be prepared to vote at the Polls on Election Day.

In-Person Early Voting

- In-Person Early Voting is available for the Town Election at the Town Clerk's Office, 173 Main St. during the following hours:

Saturday	May 10	9AM to 3PM
Monday	May 12	8AM to 7PM
Tuesday	May 13	8AM to 4PM
Wednesday	May 14	8AM to 4PM
Thursday	May 15	8AM to 4PM
Friday	May 16	8AM to 1PM

Voter and Town Election Information

- If you would like to check on your voter registration, polling location or have another voting related question, please contact the Town Clerk's office:
 - Phone: 978-448-1100
 - Email: townclerk@grotonma.gov
 - Web: www.grotonma.gov/election-information/

**BALLOT QUESTION INFORMATION FOR
May 20, 2025 ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION
Questions 1 and 2: General Overrides to Proposition 2½**

As authorized by Chapter 53, Section 18B of the General Laws

WHY ARE YOU RECEIVING THIS INFORMATION?

In towns that accept the provisions of section 18B, as Groton did by vote of the 2015 Spring Town Meeting, the Select Board is required to print and mail to each household where a registered voter resides information relating to each question that will appear on a town election ballot. The information must include (1) the full text of each question; (2) a fair and concise summary of each question, including a one sentence statement describing the effect of a yes or no vote, prepared by town counsel; and (3) arguments for and against each question, which may not exceed 150 words. When a voter question will appear on the ballot, the statute provides for a request by the town counsel for “written arguments from the principal proponents and opponents of the question,” with a notice period of at least 7 days. The statute also provides that the principal proponents and principal opponents shall be the persons determined by town counsel to be best able to present the arguments for and against the question. If no argument is received from a proponent or opponent, an argument must be prepared by town counsel.

WHAT IS AN OVERRIDE OF PROPOSITION 2½?

In 1980, the voters of the Commonwealth adopted a law by referendum commonly known as “Proposition 2½”. Proposition 2½ limits the annual tax levy of the Town, which is the total amount that can be raised by local real estate and personal property taxes, to an increase of two and one half (2½%) percent of the previous year’s levy limit plus new growth. Proposition 2 ½ allows the Town to ask the voters, through a ballot question, to override the levy limit and authorize an increase above the 2½% cap. A Town Meeting vote is required to authorize the spending, whereas a ballot vote authorizes the increase in the levy limit.

Ballot Question #1:

“Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to assess an additional \$673,250 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding the Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025?”

YES _____ NO _____

Summary of Question #1:

Question 1 seeks a permanent increase in the levy limit under Proposition 2½ by \$673,250 to fund the Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District for Fiscal Year 2026 which begins on July 1, 2025.

The \$673,250 override would add \$0.25 to the anticipated FY 2026 Tax Rate and cost the average residential taxpayer (a home valued at \$707,877) an additional \$177 per year.

Effect of a Yes or No Vote:

A YES VOTE will allow the Town to permanently increase its levy limit by \$673,250 to pay the Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District beginning in Fiscal Year 2026.

A NO VOTE will not allow the Town to permanently increase its levy limit.

Arguments In Favor and Against Question #1:

IN FAVOR: A YES vote supports the Superintendent’s proposed FY26 budget for the School District, as approved by the School Committee. In the past two years, GDRSD has reduced its budget by over \$3 million, losing teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, counselors and nurses. Class sizes have increased, course offerings have decreased and staff morale has suffered. The school district continues to pursue cost savings measures, including settling a reasonable contract with the Teachers Union, and staff members taking on additional responsibilities, pursuing grants, conducting an operational audit and advocating for state funding reform. Despite these efforts, rising costs have far outpaced the funding GDRSD receives from the Commonwealth. Due to flat state funding, the additional revenue generated by the override is necessary to avoid further reductions that impact student learning. Please vote YES on Question 1 to support our students and staff, and to preserve the quality of education that GDRSD can provide.

AGAINST: Last year Groton gave GDRSD money to perform a top to bottom efficiency analysis, but it is barely underway. GDRSD should not get override money without that analysis completed so we know our tax dollars are not wasted on unnecessary administrative positions.

The State of Massachusetts has been paying a declining percentage of GDRSD’s costs. Groton’s taxpayers have made up the difference - but it has reached the breaking point. Complaints from schools around the Commonwealth have finally been heard. The Governor’s FY26 budget includes new funding for transportation reimbursements for regional schools and other increases. An override may therefore be unnecessary. We should not approve a permanent tax increase for a solved problem.

GDRSD recently concluded a collective bargaining agreement with the Teacher’s Union that guaranteed an override would be needed. GDRSD chose to risk layoffs to avoid more difficult contract negotiations. Send a message – no more unaffordable contracts!

Ballot Question #2:

“Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to assess an additional \$780,904 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding six (6) additional Firefighter/EMTs for the Groton Fire Department for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025?”

YES _____ NO _____

Summary of Question #2:

Question 2 seeks a permanent increase in the levy limit of \$780,904 to pay for the addition of six (6) Firefighter/EMT's for the Groton Fire Department in Fiscal Year 2026 which begins on July 1, 2025.

Of the \$780,904 total override that is being requested, only \$630,504 would be spent in FY26. This amount would add \$0.22 to the anticipated FY26 Tax Rate and cost the average residential taxpayer (a home valued at \$707,877) an additional \$156 per year. The additional \$150,000, which will be needed for pension costs, will be left as excess levy capacity and will not be spent until FY28.

Effect of a Yes or No Vote:

A YES VOTE will allow the Town to permanently increase its levy limit by \$780,904 to pay for the addition of six (6) Firefighter/EMT's for the Groton Fire Department beginning in Fiscal Year 2026.

A NO VOTE will not allow the Town to permanently increase its levy limit.

Arguments In Favor and Against Question #2:

IN FAVOR: A YES vote will increase the number of career firefighters serving Groton from two per 24-hour shift to four per 24-hour shift. This additional staffing will bring the Groton Fire Department (GFD) to minimum safe operating levels, enabling them to effectively respond to all hazards and emergencies for Groton residents 24/7. Without this funding, staffing levels will remain fixed at two firefighters per shift, which, given longer hospital transport times—caused by the closure of our local hospital—and projected population growth, will lead to reduced availability of emergency services. High-quality emergency fire and EMS services are vital for attracting new residents and maintaining property values. Please vote YES to preserve our exceptional emergency services and ensure the safety of both our citizens and firefighters.

AGAINST: The closing of Nashoba Hospital initially drove the call for more fire fighters. Now though, because a Satellite Emergency Facility will soon be operating in Groton, there is less than a two-year gap in local emergency room coverage. We shouldn't add permanent people – and a permanent tax increase - to address an issue that will soon go away.

Furthermore, the information presented by the Fire Department to justify this override is heavy on emotion and fear, but light on data that justifies the need. For example, how much will response times improve by after the full-time department doubles in size? Where is the thorough analysis of why call volumes have recently increased – is this too only temporary? Additionally, their appeals to OSHA safety “mandates” were shown to be factually incorrect.

We shouldn't be adding permanent town employees, and expanding service levels, with so little study and documented need.



**EARLY / ABSENTEE
OFFICIAL BALLOT
ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION
GROTON, MASSACHUSETTS
MAY 20, 2025**

Rawn Dunbar
TOWN CLERK

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS

- A. TO VOTE, completely fill in the OVAL to the RIGHT of your choice(s) like this: ●
- B. Follow directions as to the number of candidates to be marked for each office.
- C. To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write the candidate's name and address on the line provided and completely fill in the OVAL.

<p>BOARD OF ASSESSORS Vote for NOT more than ONE For Three Years</p> <p>DONALD RADDIN BLACK 573 Longley Road Candidate for Re-election <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>	<p>PLANNING BOARD Vote for NOT more than TWO For Three Years</p> <p>GEORGE E. BARRINGER, JR. 50 Fox Run Candidate for Re-election <input type="radio"/></p> <p>DAVID J. BONNETT 50 Bridge Street Candidate for Re-election <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>	<p>TRUSTEES OF THE GROTON PUBLIC LIBRARY Vote for NOT More than ONE For One Year</p> <p>HEIDI M. REICHERT-ROBES 132 Flavell Road <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>
<p>BOARD OF HEALTH Vote for NOT more than ONE For Three Years</p> <p>ROBERT J. FLEISCHER 119 Nashua Road Candidate for Re-election <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>	<p>PLANNING BOARD Vote for NOT more than ONE For Two Years</p> <p>RUSSELL J. BURKE 324 Old Ayer Road <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>	<p>GROTON WATER COMMISSION Vote for NOT More than ONE For Three Years</p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>
<p>SELECT BOARD Vote for NOT more than TWO For Three Years</p> <p>JOHN F. REILLY 59 Fitchs Bridge Road Candidate for Re-election <input type="radio"/></p> <p>MATTHEW FRANCIS PISANI 68 Pleasant Street Candidate for Re-election <input type="radio"/></p> <p>GUY ALBERGHINI 215 Main Street <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>	<p>GROTON SEWER COMMISSION Vote for NOT More than ONE For One Year</p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>	<p>GROTON-DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE Vote for NOT More than TWO For Three Years</p> <p>ROSANNA M. CASAVECCHIA 32 Castle Drive Candidate for Re-election <input type="radio"/></p> <p>ANHEE KIM FOLEY 12 Crystal Springs Lane <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>
<p>COMMISSION OF TRUST FUNDS Vote for NOT More than ONE For Three Years</p> <p>MAIRÉAD S. ORPEN 47 Sheple Lane <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>	<p>GROTON SEWER COMMISSION Vote for NOT More than ONE For Three Years</p> <p>JAMES L. GMEINER 366 Longley Road Candidate for Re-election <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>	<p>GROTON HOUSING AUTHORITY Vote for NOT More than ONE For Three Years</p> <p>SHERRY ANN MURRAY 306 Boston Road <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>
<p>GROTON ELECTRIC LIGHT COMMISSION Vote for NOT More than ONE For Three Years</p> <p>RODNEY ROBERT HERSH 8 Bridge Street Candidate for Re-election <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>	<p>TRUSTEES OF THE GROTON PUBLIC LIBRARY Vote for NOT More than TWO For Three Years</p> <p>JENNIFER M. PETERSEN 447 Longley Road Candidate for Re-election <input type="radio"/></p> <p>MARK W. GERATH 45 West Street Candidate for Re-election <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>	<p>GROTON HOUSING AUTHORITY Vote for NOT More than ONE For Five Years</p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>
<p>PARK COMMISSION Vote for NOT more than TWO For Three Years</p> <p>ROBERT J. FOLEY 12 Crystal Springs Lane <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p> <p>(Write-in) <input type="radio"/></p>		

VOTE BOTH SIDES OF BALLOT

BALLOT QUESTIONS

BALLOT QUESTION 1

Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to assess an additional \$673,250 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding the Assessment of the Groton Dunstable Regional School District for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025?

YES

NO

BALLOT QUESTION 2

Shall the Town of Groton be allowed to assess an additional \$780,904 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding six (6) additional Firefighter/EMTs for the Groton Fire Department for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025?

YES

NO

VOTE BOTH SIDES OF BALLOT



Town of Groton
Select Board
173 Main Street
Groton, MA 01450

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